

THE NEW ART IN POSTERS.

Origin and
Growth of a
Unique Fad.

DATES BACK TO
OSCAR WILDE.

Has Revolutionized Decorative
Art and Given
Women a New In-
terest in Life.

The elevation of the poster to a place in art is one of the interesting signs of the aesthetic wave that set in ten years ago. The poster has now become an article of vertu. We have collectors, exhibitions, poster clubs, and poster connoisseurs. The initial impulse of this movement started about the time that Oscar Wilde began to lecture and succeeded in popularizing the decorative side of art. The first outbreak confined itself to maps and horse-races and dinner plates and dadas. Then it swung off to tiles and dinner menus and programmes and souvenirs. But none of these things had the exhibitionary chance of the poster. They could not get into the great public gallery of the Street, and they did not offer the wide range for novelty and originality that commerce conferred upon the poster.

It ought to be said that up to this time the poster had been one of the abominations of the earth. It glared and grinned and shocked with vulgar purpose whenever there was a coal-yard fence. It was indecorative, brutally realistic or photographically inane. The men who made it were held to the conventional straight lines of the fellow who had something to sell.

The idea that it might be made to express the new desire for line and color that Whistler in England and Chéret in Paris had insisted upon was first seized in Paris, where art in every detail is a trifle more defiant than elsewhere. It is notable that the theatre and magazine, representing drama and literature, were the first and the most liberal recognizers of the new possibilities of the poster. The first requisite of it was to catch the eye. And it was discovered that it was originality in line and color that did it. For this the advertisers had to go to genuine artists who could invent.

The result was a complete breaking away from the old restrictions. In nothing was there such an opportunity to kick over the traces of a galling conventionalism as in the poster, whose first purpose was to arrest attention. Here was the chance for every shade of restless genius to say his say in whatever lines or tints he was gambling fancy chose. Here also was the chance for hidden art to come straight to the people.

What wonder that among the first to leap into the new arena were the symbolists and soothsayers of decoration, the Bonardes and small Brownings of the crayon, with candlesticks and color catastrophes and liberty run altogether to chimericalities. They did this for the struggling poster; they drew the eye of wonder and astonishment upon it, and seeing that interest was awakened, both literature and art went into the business seriously.

In less than three years a revolution in coal-yard fences set in. It might be called the apotheosis of dead walls. Genius came to the assistance of the bill-sticker, the result reminding us of Emerson's apple cart that collided with a wall. Chéret, Grassé, Lautree, Bae, even Millais and Detaille, who had been shut up in charmed circles, began to break off like the "Marshall's" in the mob. Brick and mortar took on the esoteric airs of the French mystics. There were symphonies on the omnibuses and on the sidewalks growing on alighting trees. The blessed dandelions began to outcrop on lamp posts; Anais, Melita, Gyron and Aphrodite winked an eye to the hooded carrier and the dust man, and ogled the golden youth through the pickets.

The restlessness and the abandonment of the century-end-amateur found a new means of expression in the poster. The freedom of the pave came the respect of the Latin Quarter. Chéret and Giotto, with pen and pencil, came out of their deep sleep to perform a saraband on the new barricade of decoration.

In its first throes of life the poster was of course a little purulent and obstreperous. It smashed a thing like a lusty baby with particular perspective and chair-obscure, and ripped up intelligibility with purple and yellows. Its impulse was to smile. It was tired of green trees and blue skies and ennied beauty. It insisted on creating things its own way, and made planets grown on marshes and skunk cabbages revolve around the sun.

Beardsley was shrewd enough to avail himself of the circumstances of the time, and formulated it. His working postulate was: "All beauty perishes, therefore stick to candlesticks." His theory of art was: "Color is the highest expression of Anarchy if you know how to use it."

But presently the poster kicked itself loose from these swaddling clothes of Bedlam and came out tempered, but still original. It began to poke its aesthetic nose into new circles, just as Offenbach's chansons did twenty-five years ago. My lady picked it up, first with the tongue, and then with her dainty fingers. It caught her eye very much as George Meredith had caught her ear. It relieved her from thinking just as Lillian Russell does. It lifted her on floating lines, just as Lolo Fyffe lifts the imagination of earth-moted man.

At first she contemplated it afar off. Then she put it in her portfolio, and once there, the poster like a new belline began to reproduce its kind, and presently the portfolio was full of him. There was no gallery so pleasantly up to date, no print shop so free and reckless and affluent with an Ellenethan freedom of life. Nothing else so clearly put into form the absolutely new woman. It revolved in new lines and spread colors with an enkindling audacity. It suddenly exhibited the wantonness and lasciviousness of the bulging ass, with the lurking occasion of the Roman vestal. It was both a temptation and a revelation. It was as if nobody, having been driven out of sounds, had suddenly found a new voice in color, and the dead walls, the portfolios and the collectors' stands began to clump and crawl with the new ballads of the people.

Now what does all this mean? Simply this, that the poster is a new vehicle of expression for the sensuous gayety of heart and spontaneous love of beauty that are ineradicable in men more than that, we can see that the diffusion of art does not debase it, for the poster has grown steadily from vulgarity to soberness without losing caste with the people. When such exuberant elements as those of the Harpers and the Century took hold of the poster it began to gain a new authority. And after their shower, we found the collectors going about to find what new and strange things had fallen.

These Frenchmen have shown us in the poster the enormous possibilities of a suggestiveness in art, transferred from milieus to pictorial expressions. They have carried the convolutions of dreamy art as far from the fashion plate rectangularity as the rollicking fancy can take them, and in doing this they have relieved the contemporary mind from a depression that was no doubt responsible in great measure for the pessimism of the age.

NYM CRINKLE.

The Latest French Posters.



UNDER WATER
TO NOBOKEN.

May Yet Ride
in the North
River Tunnel.

WORK TO BEGIN
AGAIN NEXT JUNE.

It Is Going to Cost Millions,
but Seems Sure of
Being Completed
This Time.

Work is to be resumed on the North River tunnel the first of June. Within a reasonable time it will be possible for the residents of Hoboken to journey to New York in less time than it at present takes for the ferryboat to enter and leave the slip. A revolution will be wrought in the land values of New York's Jersey suburbs, and all manner of benefits are expected to result from the carrying out of a scheme that most people have considered dead. There is a better promise of success for the undertaking now than at any time since the project was suggested.

For many years a solitary watchman has guarded the building at the foot of Christopher street, which has represented the buried hopes of the promoters of the North River tunnel. American stockholders have looked upon the man as the last thread which holds to earth the money they have sunk under the waters of the Hudson. In a few months the lone watchman will be replaced by a score of busy workmen, and the work of boring into the big river will be resumed.

Since the failure of the supply of funds with which to carry on the work, in 1892, nothing has been done toward the completion of the enterprise, and it was thought by some stockholders that the project was to be given up. The mortgage is about to be foreclosed on the tunnel and the company reorganized. Sir Westman Pearson, M. P. Bart, a member of the House of Commons, and the ultimate resumption of work in the tunnel.

After several conferences with Charles M. Jacobs, the consulting engineer, and Daniel Lord, of Lord, Day & Lord, who have represented the English capitalists interested in the enterprise, a plan was formulated for the continuation of the work. As soon as the mortgage, which is held by S. Pearson & Son, is foreclosed, and the company reorganized, contracts will be made and the work rushed to a speedy completion. It is thought \$1,000,000 will be raised in this country and the same amount in London.

The tunnel enterprise has experienced many vicissitudes since its inauguration, funds for the carrying out of the work giving out several times. The project was started by E. W. Park, who secured a franchise in 1870 for a double cylindrical shaft to be drilled under the Hudson River between Hoboken and this city. De Witt C. Haskins, the engineer, became interested in the project, and was induced to take charge of the undertaking. After a great deal of trouble in raising money with which to start the work, and was broken late in the year 1880, ten years after a franchise had been granted to the originators.

After working twelve years the projector, Trenor W. Park, died, but provided that the work should be carried on by the estate. During the next year funds gave out, and De Witt Haskins, the engineer who had been in charge of the work since the commencement, was succeeded by S. Pearson & Son, of London. In the same year this London firm entered a lien on the tunnel for services. In the Fall of the following year the funds again gave out, and the work was stopped for the third time, and nothing has been done toward finishing it since.

Before work had been stopped in 1892 it was discovered that in the large steel cylinders were several cracks, which leaked somewhat, but they were supposed to be insignificant. Since that time, however, the tunnel has been gradually filling, and at present is completely filled with water. It will be necessary to pump this out before work can be resumed.



TRAPPINGS OF ROYALTY.

Barbaric Splendor in Bejewelled Crown,
Sceptre, Etc., to Be Seen at the
Coronation of the Czar.

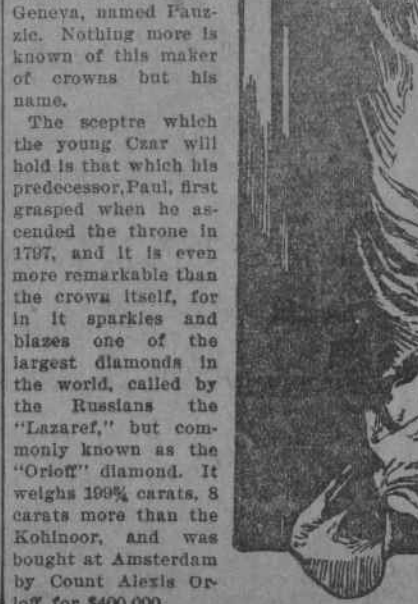
When Nicholas II. is crowned Emperor
of all the Russias next

May there will be a vast quantity of royal trappings and insignia sent from St. Petersburg to Moscow in order to make the ceremony the most magnificent in its splendor that this century has seen. The crown itself, which will be placed upon the young man's head, is, of course, the principal of the incalculably costly objects—the "props" an actor would call them—of the gorgeous show.

It is made after a Byzantine model, and its value is estimated at more than a million dollars. It is composed of two parts, symbolizing the empire of the Orient and that of the Occident. In the centre is set a splendid ruby, pear-shaped, to which are affixed five diamonds, forming a cross.

This marvelous piece of jeweller's art was made originally for the Empress Catherine II., for her coronation. It was the masterpiece of a Swiss jeweller, from Geneva, named Ponzio. Nothing more is known of this maker of crowns but his name.

The sceptre which the young Czar will hold is that which his predecessor, Paul, first grasped when he ascended the throne in 1797, and it is even more remarkable than the crown itself, for in it sparkles and blazes one of the largest diamonds in the world, called by the Russians the "Lazareff," but commonly known as the "Orloff" diamond. It weighs 190½ carats, 8 carats more than the Kohinoor, and was bought at Amsterdam by Count Alexis Orloff for \$400,000.



SUGAR THAT FLOATS.

Here is an Interesting Experiment with
Which You Can Surprise
Your Friends.

Here is a pleasant little trick that will mystify the guests at a dinner party, unless they read here how sugar may be made to float upon the surface of tea or coffee in the cup. Take a few lumps of sugar and dip them for an instant in a weak solution of collodion, which may be obtained at any store where photographers' supplies are sold.

Expose the lumps to the air for a few days, in order to give the ether in the mixture time to evaporate, and leave behind only a thin collodion skin or envelope. Pass this sugar out, preferably when iced tea is being served, and, to their surprise, the lumps, after remaining at the bottom of the glass for a few moments, will rise to the surface, and refuse to sink, even when tapped by the spoon.

The fact is, the apparent sugar is a delusion. The real sugar has been dissolved, and only the thin envelope of the collodion which filled the interstices remains.

The illusion presented by this "ghost" of the sugar lump is perfect, as it floats lightly on the surface. Taken between the thumb and forefinger it collapses into a gelatinous mass.

WILL PAY FOR HIS NAME.

This Concern Offers \$100 a Year to a Lawyer
for the Use of His Letter Heads
in Collecting Debts.

An advertisement appeared in a recent issue of a Sunday newspaper that throws some light upon the unscrupulous methods followed by some of the so-called collection agencies of the city. It reads as follows: "A large manufacturing concern desires to secure the services of an attorney at law of good standing to the extent of permitting the use of his name as a signature to peppery letters to be addressed to slow paying customers. To the right party we will pay \$100 per annum."

In other words, this concern is willing to pay \$100 for the use of a lawyer's name to sign the bulldozing and threatening letters, intended to make the slow payer believe that legal proceedings are contemplated. This may be within the law, but the personation of city marshals by employees of the collection agencies and the subsequent employment of city marshals and their deputies as collectors, in which private capacity they pretend to be acting officially, making a gross show of "papers" and badges are regarded as direct violations of law, but so common that no one ever thinks of questioning their acts.



14' EXPOSITION 31 RUE BONAPARTE



SALON DES 100



BELLEVUE'S NEW BATH.

The Best That
Modern Science
Could Devise.

NO HOSPITAL
CAN EQUAL IT.

Separate Rooms for Suffer-
ers from Different Dis-
eases, with Up-to-Data
Equipment.

In a few weeks Bellevue Hospital will possess a set of baths which, for luxury and convenience, will far surpass the celebrated baths of the famous old Roman emperors. Not only have the best features of the Turkish, Roman and Russian systems been utilized and improved upon, but every detail in the most modern plans has been carefully inspected by the most competent men in the line, acting under the instruction of celebrated scientists.

Some time ago, upon the urgent request of the physicians connected with the institution, \$10,000 was appropriated for the establishment of a set of baths which they claimed would do more good in many instances than a large amount of medicine. Plans were drawn, and upon their approval contracts were awarded and the work begun. The baths are located in the basement in the rear of the main building, directly under the superintendent's office.

The system is divided into a series of eight rooms, each of which has its own particular place in the list of diseases affecting the patients.

In the first room, a spacious bath, 5 feet by 2, is supplied from three faucets, labelled, respectively, "Ice," "Cold," "Hot." Nor does one have to wait five minutes for the "hot" water to run out; it does so the moment it is permitted to escape. A glass thermometer shows the exact temperature of the room and enables a watchful attendant to keep it at the proper point.

Room two is devoted to the sulphur and electric baths. It has one cabinet bath, two sulphur baths and one of the electro-therapeutic kind, regulated by coils in the centre of the chamber. The heating and ventilating appliances are of the modern design, and the fresh air taken from the outside is heated before penetrating the apartment.

Passing to the third room, one finds the spray, douche and shower baths, fitted with pipes from which either steam-heated, moderate or ice-cold water can be drawn by simply turning the faucet one way or the other. These, it is believed, probably eclipse in completeness anything of a similar nature in the United States.

Probably the most elaborate room is No. 4. In this are four tubs, two described as "ordinary," one as "medicated," and one as "emergency," supplemented in two needle sprays. The "medicated" tub is to be devoted to patients whose diseases require the mixture of various drugs or elements with the water in which they bathe, especially those suffering from skin troubles and kindred complaints, while the emergency bath is to be used only where more powerful ingredients are introduced into the water required by the patient. Like all the other rooms, it is floored with marble, finished in hard wood, and ceiling with a pattern of inlaid wood, having the appearance of elaborate tiling.

A perfect system of vapor baths is to be found in the next apartment, which measures 13 feet 6 inches in length and reaches a breadth of 10 feet. Its sanitary details are perfect in every respect, and the amount of good to be accomplished by this means is almost incalculable.